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MARYLAND LIKES

BEATEN BISCUIT

Other Southern cooks make "beaten biscuit" but the Marylanders seem to be most widely famed for this special method of mixing an unleavened dough to make a breadstuff with its own unusual texture, more like a thick, flaky cracker than like other hot breads.

Like pastry, beaten biscuits contain no baking powder. The proportion of fat is much smaller than the amount needed for pastry. To make the dough blister and incorporate air so the biscuits will be flaky or crumbly, the dough is beaten hard for about 30 minutes. Then the biscuits are baked for 20 minutes. So, while they are classed as "quick breads" as distinguished from "light" breads made with yeast, they cannot be made very quickly. In food value beaten biscuits are about the same as other breadstuffs made with white flour, fat, and water. Marylanders serve them at any meal. Like crackers, they will keep in a tightly covered tin. They are excellent to accompany soup or salad, and just the thing with cheese for a late snack. An up-to-date variant of beaten biscuit has grated cheese rubbed into the flour with the fat.

Maryland Beaten Biscuit

2 cups flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
2½ tablespoons fat
1/3 cup cold water

Sift the flour and the salt, rub in the fat with the tips of the fingers.

(more)

(Maryland likes beaten
biscuit)

When well mixed, add enough cold water to make a stiff dough and knead until smooth. Beat with a rolling pin or potato masher for 25 to 30 minutes or until the dough blisters. Pinch off small pieces of the dough and after rolling into a ball, flatten out by pressing with the thumb in the center of the ball. Prick with a fork. Place in a lightly greased pan and chill for 1/2 hour. Bake 20 minutes in a fairly hot oven (400° F.) at first, then reduce the temperature to 375° F. Continue the cooking until the biscuits are very light brown.

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(Note to extension editor--The extension service of Maryland contributes this recipe for the series of "State specialists." Margaret McPheeters, extension nutrition specialist, and A. H. Snyder, extension editor, stand back of Maryland's specialty. We hope to include a famous dish from each State in this series. Please send your contribution to L. A. Schlup, Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.)